

PASTORALIST FORUM ETHIOPIA

**Rally of the *Borana, Guji, Gebra, Arsi and Marian*
Pastoral Clans of Oromiya**

Report

**June 2004
Addis Ababa**

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Report

I. Introduction

Four clans of Oromo ethnic group comprised of pastoral elders and Aba Gadas of *Borana, Guji, Gebra, Arsi and Marian of Liben*, Dirre and Moyale Woredas conducted a joint rally at Yabello (SORDU compound) from June 8-15, 2004. The pastoralists initiated the rally with the objectives to discuss and to frame pastoral problems each ethnic group might have and to consolidate and present these problems in the form of resolutions, which would be submitted to relevant officials or for research purposes for evaluation and for arriving at their eventual solutions.

For sake of simplicity the meeting modality was shaped in to two types. The first meeting was from June 8-10 and meant for the Pastoralists while the second meeting was arranged for all participants including invited peoples and organizations to witness the occasion. The latter program extended from June 11-14, 2004. As the nature of the rally requires a native facilitator Obbo Nura Dida from Negelle admirably facilitated the occasion.

Pastoral Communication Initiative (PCI) in collaboration with the Borana Zonal Administration, and Pastoralist Forum Ethiopia sponsored the meeting. PCI accompanied by distinguished guests like Professor Roberts Chambers and Dr. Taghi from Iran. The total participants were 186 representing pastoral communities, Pastoral Standing Committee of the Parliament, distinguished resource people from different NGOs and bi-lateral, and the Government Media.

II. The Setting

Mini-meetings for each clan groups were arranged and assigned their own facilitators. These included Borana, Guji, and Gabera clans. Arsi and Merian clans were represented with few members so that they merged to the Borana groups. In order to follow the age-old traditional qualities, the meeting was held under the shed of big Acacia trees in the SORDU Project Compound.

Before all the three pastoral groups came together for a joint meeting each group separately discussed and thrashed out what they felt was their major problems. Except few guests all the participants understand Oromiffa language so there were no language barriers.

The following sections have come up with a live documentation of the process and with the final resolutions passed by the groups at the end of the rally.

III. Results of the rally

3.1 The Borana Pastoralist's Case

Fora (satellite herd) or *Wara* (permanent) settlement in wet season grazing areas either in the form of keeping dry herds or family herd or staying long enough near to a family farm is a menace to the established traditional grazing pattern of the Borana pastoralists. Ethnic conflict over resources occurs most of the time due to shortage of water and grazing. Fleeing ones traditional area and coming into another's territory exacerbates conflict situations. Expansion of cultivation by agro-pastoralists is a phenomenon emerged in recent two decades as the result of ravaging drought caused by global climate change. However, agro-pastoralism is taken as a sort of last minute strategy adopted by both rural and urban opportunistic farmers to bring in supplementary crops and cash for the family. This new innovation has calumniated in considerable damage to the rangeland.

Furthermore, rich and wealthy pastoralists have seriously usurped rangelands in excess in the name of '*kello*' (dry-season enclosure) at the expense of the majority of the poor pastoralists. The Borana '*kello*' system was originally meant for young calves, and sick animals unable to move to resources. The rangeland is deteriorating due to lack of effective livestock marketing system. There is always new phenomenon developing in the pastoral communities. The Borana pastoralists used to slaughter animals at *Wara* level for their own home consumption. But these days, they take the animals to the town, slaughter them and sell the meat. This practice has reduced the number of live animals destined to potential markets.

More causes of rangeland deterioration could be cited. Fear of burning the rangeland has encouraged undesirable bush and poisonous snakes, pythons, and serpents to reproduce. The cause of fear emanated from the government proclamation prohibiting burning of rangelands adjoining the State Forests. Animal health coverage is not satisfactory in a region with a high livestock potential. The animal health situation is also deteriorating. There are no effective veterinary clinics in most of the *Maddas* (higher social unit). With regard to human health, there are adequate health clinics and health officers giving adequate service to cover the communities. The number of trained traditional birth attendants (TBA's) is minimal.

Education is by far one of the biggest burning problems of the Borana pastoral society. The education level has been limited to only 4th grade. Borana pastoralists are not very comfortable with sending girls to schools because the schools are located far away in towns. Children could not travel to far away places to attend classes. Particularly the girls are victims of this situation. In addition, the Borana family cannot afford to feed their children in towns. As a result, this situation has hampered the overall education momentum in the Borana pastoral communities. Deforestation and hunting of wildlife are some extra curricular activities of the different people either visiting or residing in the pastoral areas. This activity has a negative impact on the rangeland. Some alien issues that emerged and adopted as the result of weakened traditional mechanisms have also contributed significantly to the weakening of the Borana traditional and cultural system

A Borana man is said to have lost his respect for animals. In olden times, when cattle draw closer to their kraal in the evenings after the day's grazing out, the owners sit and wait outside their kraal waiting for the animals to arrive. Upon arrival of the animals, it is a traditional obligation to stand up and 'well-come' the animals for inspection as they enter their kraal (cattle boma/mona). This tradition, respect and treatment of cattle are now watered down by the activity of crop growing near to the Olla/village. Cultivation has diverted the attention of the pastoralists. The tradition was to maintain the prerogative of animals and not to get too much obsessed with cultivation. As a matter of fact, cultivation was a taboo up to recent years to the extent that no one is allowed to touch the ground with *ulle* (the end of a stick) or a spear let alone cultivating the land. Also, in olden times, it was a taboo even to talk to a virgin girl on a flirt basis. They have a high degree of respect in the society. Nowadays, raping and other obstinate acts are common phenomenon. The girls are no longer safe in travelling alone by themselves long distances let alone to schools.

In an innocent area adoption of bad habits are obviously attributed to outside sources. Cursing mother using abominable words was considered to be a serious offence leading even to a capital punishment. Young children have now picked up these nasty words and use them on people including their immediate relatives. The cause of all these disarray is attributed to weakening of the tradition that used to be powerful in protecting to such a case. This protection mechanism is no longer in place. Issues reiterated above are said to be the central cause for the Borana tradition to be weakened. Most of these issues, however, are also attributed to corruption which did not exist before but through time gradually emerged as innovations regrettably adopted by the innocent common Borana pastoral man, the elders, and finally by the Raba-Gada leaders. Despite this current wave of corruption, some sincere and concerned Borana individuals expressed their sorrow that they do not even know where to go and present their disappointments.

Suggestions on Borana Problems

- Identify and delineate cultivable areas and grazing lands proper
- Government must halt land alienation and give appropriate solutions to rampant conflict situations in the area
- Stop seizing 'Kello' in excess
- Sell unproductive animals before drought and raiders claim them and put the proceeds in the bank
- Build more schools in many places of the pastoral areas and improve the level of rural education
- Build more humans and vet clinics and assign personnel who could speak and understand the culture and tradition of the Boorana pastoralists
- Build more schools at all Maddas
- Construct access roads, specially leading to ellas/ wells or ponds
- Increase the level of rural education from 4th grade to 8th. Grade.
- Build hostels where pastoral families could have access to their children
- Stop cutting ritual and ceremonial trees
- Give appropriate attention and protection to conserve wildlife
- Prohibit the sale of water in cash and kind in pastoral areas
- Prohibit sale of grass in cash and kind in pastoral areas
- Reinstate the weakened ella prerogatives at all Maddas
- Reviewed and reinstate the Boorana 'Hayu' prerogatives
- Forbid sale of 'araki' and ostracize those who resort to drinking them.
- Stop harassing and molesting virgin girls and women

In the end, the overall consensus with regard to the above-mentioned problems necessitated that these issues need to be taken to the next Gumi Gayo General Assembly for detailed evaluation and final resolution.

3.2 The Gabbra Pastoralist's Case

The Gabbra pastoralists listed the frequent upsurge of conflict over water and grazing use as well as revenge taken on innocent pastoralists by other ethnic groups. Gabbra pastoralists believe that there is a need for the four pastoral groups to leave behind all past grievances right under the shade of trees and to go back home on brotherly and pastoral-friendly atmosphere. Strengthening this kind of joint rallies in the presence of younger and older generations need to be conducted on a regular basis. The prevailing salient corruption from the government side has also caused more damage to the morals of the pastoral communities. One example could be that whenever a suspect of any on crime, violators are reported to the police, there is no serious follow up of the cases in question. This situation has encouraged further crimes to take place.

It is known that drought frequency is so high that pastoralists lose cattle and camels so fast. Livestock is an asset. Selling of animals for family needs and for diversifying income is important to improve livelihoods. When animals have no adequate feed, the purchase of feed during stress period is of paramount importance. Problems of livestock marketing, human and animal health are still not well addressed. Especially, the possibility of capturing foreign exchange by exporting camels seems to be a remote wish. Efficient livestock marketing system in the pastoral areas will have to be exhaustively investigated, surfaced out and bring it into reality.

With the growth of both human and livestock population in the pastoral area, the available resources are shrinking. One of the factors contributing to resource shrinkage is cultivation. The emergence of agro-pastoralists and the co-existence of pastoralists with pure livestock raiser will not take both of them a long way. Government policy is not there to adjust this conflicting situation. Hence, if the rangeland is left alone and to continue on like that, and if there are no rescue measures put in place by applying appropriate land use system, the human support capacity will come to zero. Achieving efficient utilisation of the rangeland is only possible if appropriate rangeland use policy is designed and put in place by the government.

A short-term suggestion would be to identify and delineate those pastoral areas that are practical for cultivation and has comparative advantage for livestock grazing. Wildlife is very important component of our rangeland. So far their economic and ecological values are not well understood. Our neighbour, the Kenyans benefit a lot from wild life tourism. In the same manner, our government must support conservation of wildlife and forest to maximise the best benefit out of them. The causes of deforestation are definitely abusing the existing natural resources on hand. If trees are without any reason, there is bound to be a desert. Concerted efforts are required of all stakeholders to circumvent these on devastating activities.

The Gabbbras do not drink. However, those individuals who resort to drinks and chat chewing might have to resent and give up drinks for the sake of animals and should start leading a normal life. Another top human killer diseases of the time is HIV/AIDS. It is not only found in towns and cities, it is also a friend living among pastoralists. Several HIV/AIDS health proponents have demonstrated its mode of transmission. The said practices are by far not implanted. It takes a good discipline to refrain from all possible causes of AIDS.

The Gabbbras are camel breeders and they want to live in peaceful co-existence with all pastoralists. In comparing the foraging habits of the two species, camels and cattle, have different foraging habits. They need to be accommodated according to their foraging habit. Pastoralists need to settle all disputes over resource use according to their traditional norm.

Preservation of good culture is important. Raping of girls is not allowed by culture. Rapists should be arrested and brought to justice. Even if a man is found molesting someone's wife, he should be sued legally and brought to justice. Girl's virginity has to be respected. The problems of bush encroachment is becoming beyond control. Government and all relevant stakeholders are needed to investigate ways and means of eradicating or halting bush encroachment in the rangelands. In this regard, research is required in order to identify suitable control mechanism.

Suggestions on Gabbra's Problems

- Avoid conflict of all natures
- Build peace
- Fight corruption
- Sell saleable animals on time
- Diversify income generation possibilities
- Lobby for establishment of functional pastoral livestock marketing system
- Involve government in the expansion of cultivation in the pastoral areas
- Delineate cultivable and grazing lands within the pastoral areas
- Involve community to control illegal wildlife hunting and poaching
- Trees need to be cut on advice basis from the agro-forestry people
- Reinstate the old tradition (ada) of cutting tree
- Work towards banning the sale and consumption of 'araki' and 'chat' chewing in the pastoral areas
- Observe all rules and regulations about HIV/AIDS and cutting trees.
- Stay with one wife (monogamous)
- Preserve fodder for livestock in form of hays or standing hay fodder also need to be preserved as well.
- Strengthen animal health control system
- Preserve good culture and tradition.
- Respect Girl's chaste
- Bring rapists to justice
- Identify useful and harmful bush and only preserve the ones that are useful

3.3 The Guji Pastoralist' s Case

Drought is a strong natural phenomenon that cannot be controlled. Pastoralists need to prepare themselves in order to with stand drought. Drought is a big problem in arid and semi arid areas of the country. In pastoral areas, rangeland mobility is important in order to exploit the under-utilised resources and to distribute livestock over the rangeland and to exploit resources more efficiently. The rangeland needs to be maintained in order to support life. The pastoralists developed their own traditional system in order to be able to manage their scarce resources. The ecosystem they live in is very fragile and it needs appropriate exploitation and specialised form of management practices.

The other problem is conflict, which frustrates the young and the old pastoralists. Conflicts are not good. Most of the time clashes occur due to low level of awareness on the part of the pastoralists. The current political gimmick with nations nationalities is to respect one another and in particular to respect the unity of the same ethnic groups. In the past, criminals were not seriously sued when they kill a man. These criminals are dangerous if they do not respect laws. There is a need to collaborate and bring them to justice regardless of which clan he/she belongs to. Normal rains either come on time or come late. Grasses respond to adequate moisture. Preservation of fodder and deferring rangeland for future use is important from the point of view of providing animals with adequate feed. However, pastoralists will have to agree to defer grazing areas for such purposes.

All pastoralists complain that there are no adequate human and animal health services in the pastoral areas. The few clinics that exist do not function properly. Access roads are required to facilitate easy communication and to patrol the rangeland more efficiently. The 'ellas' are deep well and they have difficult access to the watering trough of the ella. To maintain efficient supply of water for both human and livestock, the entrance or the ramp leading to these wells need to be improved. Livestock require gentle slope to run down the isle especially during the drought period when they are thirsty and run faster than normal.

There are no reliable livestock marketing systems in the pastoral area. Even though there is a strong desire for most pastoralists to sell their animals, getting good prices for their animals has been a constraint over many years. Pastoralists who own the herd have not been able to harvest the fruits of their labour. Middlemen and hawkers normally buy from the pastoralists as bush buyers. They buy the animals and hand them over to bigger traders who make amass larger profit. Despite the lack of livestock market, pastoralists would still like like to sell their animals if the market is attractive.

There were different and endemic species of wildlife in the Borana rangeland in olden times. People with guns specially the ex-soldiers used to shoot as many as they could afford on a daily basis. Hunting wild life with guns has now subsided while specialised hunters have emerged using soundless weapons like bows, arrows and traps. It is rather difficult to control these poachers. The wild life is important from the point of tourism. Now, there is no wildlife in the rangeland and even the

ones that have started to come back from the neighbouring countries, are not encouraged to settle in their original homeland. The government does not have appropriate conservation measures in order to safe guard the integrity of these wild lives. The very few forest stands existing in the Borana rangeland are heritages of the country. Forests and trees are cut without the supervision of the concerned authorities.

Adoptions of bad habits are of recent episode. Pastoralists normally drink milk. Adoption of 'araki' (local brewed alcohol) as part of rendezvous has gone beyond limit. It has gone to the extent that addicts have already consumed their asset with the advent of 'araki' into the region. Many Pastoralists including women have become victims of araki. The have even started to bargain with their husbands. If her husband drinks she says why not me. So it looks that this particular drink is directly affecting the food security situation of the entire pastoral communities and something aught to be done about it.

3.4 Discussions on Issues of Common Concerns

Before the floor was opened for discussion, the pastoralists were asked what problem they consider to be the most important one in the Borana lowlands?' They answered conflict is and has been the most worrying problem of all.

Suggestions on Guji Problems

- Develop and prepare drought contingency livelihood system
- Focus on revitalisation and rehabilitation of the Boorana rangeland
- Avoid conflict and resort to tree shade negotiation
- Discourage criminals of sorts from committing crime
- Get consensus of the majority of the pastoralists to start to defer grazing areas
- Collaborate with government and NGOs to facilitate construction of gentle slope at ella ramps
- Lobby for the establishment of an effective livestock marketing system in the pastoral areas
- Protect wildlife from extinction and report poachers and illegal hunters
- Construct more human and animal health clinics
- Construct access network roads to market and to pastoral neighbours
- Ban drinking and production of 'araki and other intoxicating drinks and stimulants
- Establish traditional customary laws for drunkards in the pastoral system.
- Conserve wildlife and forests

Regarding a girls case, a Woman from Moyale said that pastoral girls are in big problem. There are many incidences where raping took place particularly after men are drunk. When elders investigate this issue, there is unfair justice that when they get pregnant boys are allowed to go free while the girls are condemned for the act. This is not fair. This happens when the case is brought to traditional elders who are easily corrupted by 'araki' and make such a biased verdict.

Dembela Wachu Ranch issue

Dembella Wachu ranch is situated 50 kms South of Yabello on the tar mark road that passes through it to Moyale. Conflict between cattle drovers and the ranch co-operative members is one off the issues raised at the meeting. The cause of the conflict is the use of the ranch by cattle passing through the ranch on hoof to a market place. The cattle drovers have been told not to move the cattle through the ranch. The cattle drovers had apparently no choice except to drive their animals through this ranch. The cause of the conflict is actually expansion of the ranch into pastoral grazing areas. Consequently, cattle drovers are forced to go through Dembella Wachu ranch since they do not have other alternative routes.

Response from SORDU Ranch Management Unit

SORDU admits the conflict is there. The co-operative members like to save their standing hay for their animals in the ranch and hence, do not want others to graze the area. As there is no alternate routes for the cattle drovers, the ranch co-operative members have agreed that a certain fee be paid by the cattle drovers just to pass through the ranch and not to stay for overnight in the ranch. While the issue on the Dembella Wachu ranch was getting heated up, there was a proposal from one of the pastoralists that it would be better to discuss issues of common nature instead of talking only about the problem of one *Arda* (locality). The matter was left for the Dembella Wachu co-operative members and for the relevant PA administration to settle and to follow up the conflict issue. Individual comments were entertained for sometime before consensus was reached.

| Comments on the way forward | | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| No | Name | Comments | Place of work |
| 1 | Hon. Sheno Godana | It is important to raise issues points by points and discuss them | Parliament |
| 2 | Elias Gallgalo | The three groups have presented their cases; hence, it would be better to discuss these points one by one. | P.C.A, E |
| 3 | Huka Gerese | Reiterated the fact that the three groups have heard and accepted all the problems each group presented, thus it would be better without taking too much time to dwell on problems raised and to give appropriate solutions accordingly. | SOS/Sahel |
| 4 | Haji Boru: | Commented on the quantity of Araki transported to Dubuluk on market days as being too much. This should be one of our important agenda for discussion | Borana elder |
| 5 | One of the pastoralists | Proposed that it would be better to establish a committee and let them digest each problem and come up with a summary of the whole discussed issues. | Borana elder |
| 6 | Nura Dida: | Proposed that such a meeting be convened every 6 months | Borana elder, Liben |
| 7 | Haji Boru: | He supported and strengthened the idea that each ethnic group must frequent such a rally on own initiative and in doing so must basically depend on own financial resources. | Borana elder Web |
| 8 | One of the pastoralists | We need to strengthen this rally and to follow it up more seriously. In fact, it opens up an avenue whereby we pass the system over to our children. Thus, there is a need to form a committee for the follow up. | Yabello |
| 9 | Nura Dida (the | Asked the group if this meeting was necessary or not. | Borana elder, |

| | | | |
|----|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|
| | facilitator): | | Liben |
| 10 | Sar Jirmo (Borana Yabello town elder): | Supported the idea that there is no doubt about establishing such a committee. | Borana elder Yabillo |
| 11 | One of the pastoral ladies: | <i>Before</i> the individual comments ended, she proposed that Geri clans must be included in the rally in future. | Moyale |
| 12 | <i>Nura Dida</i> | <i>Asked when the group should meet again</i> | |

Before the meeting ended, the following representatives from Borana, Guji and Gabbra ethnic groups were elected to summarise the whole points of discussion and to present it to the plenary. They constituted the summarising committee:

1. Dulecha and Huka Gerse- Borana 2.Sheno Godana and Hassen Kalla- Gabbra Anna Haro and Hinbaro Edema - Guji

As this rally is essentially meant to address problems of all the rangeland users, the need to have more participation of these varied groups was debated for a while. The proposal to have 5 representatives from each clan may not be practical from the point of view of transporting them from one end of the Zone to the other. In other words, fewer people are needed for a pastoral committee in such a region where shortage of transport system exists.

After a lot of pros and cons, the group decided to have 5 people as committee members representing each clan. That is: 5 people to be nominated from Borana, 5 from Guji and 5 from Gebra but 2 from other clans who did not come to the meeting. They are 2 from Marian and 2 from Arsi.

Summary Of Suggestions Forwarded by Each Pastoral Group

- Establish relevant and appropriate pastoral oriented extension system
- Improve banking services
- Enhance in collaboration with government and pastoralists the availability of human and vet clinics staffed with local professionals along with adequate drug supplies
- Construct new access roads and repair old ones
- Strengthen livestock research in pastoral areas (this is almost coming up)
- Establish labs for both human and livestock
- Strengthen the availability of clean drinking water
- Establish training centre for production of livestock experts
- Strengthen or modify SORDU to be more efficient and purposeful
- Encourage and establish a conducive environment for the girls to go to schools
- Expand 4th grade to 8th grade
- Repair the existing hostels and construct new ones
- Fight corruption at all levels
- Stay within own tradition and culture and avoid picking up bad habits from other sources
- Improve salt crater entrances
- Bring back old culture of cutting trees
- Give awareness to the Raba-gada authorities and traditional leaders to stay away from corruption
- Ban forest clearing for cultivation
- Go back to tradition
- Refrain from wild life hunting
- Maintain all water sources
- Introduce modern family planning

Issues requiring the direct involvement the Raba-gada leaders to streamline the following social problems

Drinking 'araki' and chewing chat
Going to different women
Staying with own wife
Usage of condoms
Minimising kafano culture (prearranged dating system)
And avoiding Garayu system (married women as a girl friend)

3.5 How to deal with Violator of traditions?

The different clans might have their own distinct way of approaching a violator/s hence; each clan group must deal with his own clan's violators.

Hon. Obbo Kibre Jimmera (Pastoralist Affairs Standing Committee Deputy Chairman)

I am happy to see that the different clan groups came together to discuss their problems. You have raised most of these questions at the 6th Ethiopian Pastoralist Day. With regard to your demand and question about the issues you raised at the 6th Pastoralist day, we have written a letter to all concerned line Ministries and Commissions. We have addressed your entire plight to all that is supposed to hear about your plight. Pastoralist Forum Ethiopia has further distributed the letters conveying your feelings and aspirations to all PFE and NGO members.

Government is in the process of establishing pastoralist programme. There is also a Pastoral Extension Team (PET) within the MOA and is expected to stretch its structure right down to pastoral PAs. There is also a plan to establish a training centre where pastoral children could be trained. The government is investigating livestock marketing situation whereby possibilities for export market are being studied. There was a time when the Egyptian government requested for 1000 head of camels for festivals. The main strategy to remove constraint to export market operation is to strengthen animal health situation in order to encourage take off. The other condition is that utilisation of government allotted budget has to go all the way down to the end users. Thus, it would be your responsibility and right to ask questions with regard to utilisation of the budget allotted to your Zones. There is also a fund whose source is from the World Bank. It is about 2 million Birr, which has already been released to Arero and Dirre Woredas. One has to flow it up with Oromia Pastoral Development Commission OPDC to check whether that money has reached the end users or not.

You could also find out with OPDC about the entire funding situation of the World Bank. The Ministry of Federal Affairs MoFA is responsible and monitors the flow of this fund. It is important to know what the government is trying to promote by way of improving your livelihoods. The problems you raised over the last few days need to have solutions. You have also your own asset. You need to be organised and start to utilise your assets in a way that it improves your livelihoods.

Tadesse Bahiru – Borana Zonal Administrator

Towards the end of the meeting, Obbo Tadesse responded to some of the points raised by the pastoralists. One of these points is that the government has failed to take appropriate measures when criminals are caught and brought to justice. In the eyes of the pastoralists, such criminals must die. It is difficult at Zonal level to implement that kind of verdict it is the jurisdiction of the Jury at the Federal level to deal with such high degree crimes.

The other issue is that banks are not giving elaborate service to the pastoral communities. In practical sense, what I see as a problem is lack of saving and not that the banks are not giving service. During drought livestock die and before they all wiped out pastoralists might have to sell their animals and save the money for bad days. In this regard, the idea of expanding banking service is a worthwhile idea to support.

In connection with weakening of traditional system I see one root cause for that, Araki. You are told to stop to drink Araki and then you resort to beer. Some pastoral family heads sold animals and drunk the proceeds. This is too bad. It is hard to use force to stop people from drinking. However, one has to persuade himself that habitual drinking could lead to sale of all the assets. It takes a lot of bad experience for such people to come to their own decision not to drink. The other issue is the natural resources asset. Do you have any intention to plant trees in the lowlands? I did not hear anything along that line. Forests need not to be delineated by barbed wires; do you think That is a durable solution? Verbal fencing does more job than this if you really tell pastoralists to notice about the value and importance of forest.

Questions from the Borana Zonal Administration

- ***How far are you seriously prepared to handle the following issues?***
- Have you ever handed thieves over to police?
- Do you think you are prepared to save money by selling your animals?
- Are you determined to stop 'araki' and not to resort to beer drinking?
- How do you like to handle and cope up with the expansion of cultivation?
- How far are you prepared to sell your animals if there is a market?
- How far are you prepared to educate your children? Especially girls?

One of the speakers: I am happy to see this kind of meeting. It is important to come together and identify problems of common nature. The point is not only to bring out problems but also to combat the root causes before small problems become big problems.

***Comments and Specific Questions posed
by Obbo Halaka (Guji Zonal Administrator)***

The important issue is to focus on conflict and conflict resolution. Why should the Oromos fight one another over issues that can be accommodated? As Oromo ethnic group, there is no need to fight. Also you have raised the question of lack of livestock market. Now, do you think you could improve your living conditions by selling your animals and if so, how do you go about it, if you have the marketing system in place? The question of education- in particular that of girl's education - is always on the agenda. What is your decision on this matter?

W/o Sintayehu, Zonal Women's Affair Head: I do not see a woman elected to be in any committee. Does that mean there is no women pastoralist? How come they are not invited to the meeting? The organisers of the rally accepted her suggestion and asked for an apology. The mistake has been made because there was too much leaning on traditional system where women are easily forgotten for such a men's rally. This will not be repeated next time and they will be invited.

Elias Guyo: He said there are some schools built in the past by past regimes; then there are no students. What is the inherent problem? He proposed 'mobile' school system might address such problems. Focus on the pastoral curriculum is another important matter to think about. He also asked the group to think about girl's circumcision.

Sora Adi BLPDP/GTZ: I have been here 36 years ago. I was the only one who used to handle all the government activities. Now we have almost all types of structure of the government being implemented at grassroots level. The way I understand pastoralists is that they take things one at a time. They do not write. They use their memorise. Hence, in order not to kill the patients we need to revisit then with the documentation of this rally. The decision of the pastoralists needs to be blessed by the Aba Gadas. Gradual follow up and individual discussions with pastoral elders enhance better undressing of the entire issue.

Prof. Taghi from Iran (Social Anthropology)

I have learnt a lot from the meeting. You have already identified your problems and I do not reiterate them. However, I did not hear one of the best decisions you ought to make. I fear that by the time we all go back home. We may not have all the decision at our disposal.

Prof. Robert Chambers from IDS, UK

I am happy to see this kind of meeting including the way the meeting was moderated. I wish you all the best on the implementation and peace making in general so that and that you would be able to improve your livelihoods.

1.1 Plenary discussion results

Haji Boru: asked the audience why do not we learn other languages like Amharic and English.

Huka Gerse: totally disagreed with Haji Boru in that Oromos have lately started to use own language and I do not see why we should spoil this opportunity. Anybody who wants to pick up more languages could do so own on his/her own account. Hence, there is no need to use others language besides Oromifa in the Oromia Region.

Haji Boru: Thanks we are able to come to the end of our meeting. When I said why not we use other languages besides Oromifa, I do not mean we have to forget about Oromifa. What I wanted to say is that more languages are useful and provide more advantage for individual to pick up extra language. It is not like Obbo Huka said

that I wanted to forget about the Oromifa language. Please do not misunderstand me there.

Koye Kura - a lady from Negelle

She said women are as intelligent as men. It is a woman who gave birth to all government leaders and to scientists of the world. Pastoral women do have a lot of jobs besides giving birth to a child. What made us inferior? Women were made traditional this way not now but since the time immemorial. We hear that women do have their right but still we do not have our rights. Men deny certain decisions to be effective. The main reason for us not coming to the meeting is the fact that you want to run away from the truth. You do not want us to speak about our plights. Please encourage women to come forward and discuss their problems as well. One of the speakers said we have lived over 500 years as pastoralists raising animals. What I want to say is that we need to use our rights to voice our plights. It is the era of Internet and computer age. We need to know Scio-economical aspect of our surroundings. Latest communication could facilitate our marketing information to outside world through Internet.

Haji Boru added that livestock banking has to come into the picture. He invalidated that 'food for work' has undermined the capacity of the people to be self-reliant and to develop own capacity for self-determination.. Food for work has contributed to the weakening of the indigenous system. The other issue is when courts want witness for allegation cases, people run away with their animals to far away places into other bush.

Hussein Galgalo: wanted to know how the newly appointed committee would function. The answer to this question was not satisfactory. The new committee will be reviewed and their main responsibilities and duties will be made known to the pastoralists in the due course.

After a week's deliberation on communal problems of the pastoralists inhabiting the Borana rangeland, the Borana, the Guji the Gebbra, and the Arsi and ethnic groups have made the following resolutions by way of winding up the rally.

Resolutions

- 1. Peace is the main foundation of development. To that end we need to work towards achieving it**
- 2. We shall put our asset into efficient use**
- 3. We shall educate our children**
- 4. Grazing and agricultural lands need to be identified**
- 5. HIV education must be expanded in the rangeland**
- 6. Forest and wildlife must not be destroyed**
- 7. We need livestock market to be expanded and made practical for our trading system**
- 8. We shall cooperate and move with the development proponents forward**
- 9. Our tradition has been weakened and hence we need all stakeholders to stand next to us and support us in the process of retrieving our old culture and tradition.**
- 10. We have established age old system whereby we evaluate and pass resolutions at Gumi Gayo and hence we demand that government give due recognition and institutionalise this system for the benefit of all**
- 11. The old general assembly of Book of Guji and Ess of Gebra must be We have also tow other tradition institution of Guji and Gebra need to be brought back**
- 12. Women participation in all facets of development must be encouraged**
- 13. Drinks and other dangerous stimulants must totally be discouraged**

After the ethnic groups have passed their resolutions, there was an urgent question to be answered. The question was when to have the next meeting and how to organise it? It was decided by the Pastoralists that the next meeting should be conducted after 6 months. However, this decision did not look very unanimous; so it was amended in such a way that every body goes back home to their respective Woredas and consult with the people when to have the next rally.

IV. Conclusion

The pastoral communities are rich in discussion and making decision on their own accord. However, the present meeting can be taken as the continuation of the impact of the 6th Ethiopian Pastoralist Day too. The communities are empowered so that started to call up extra ordinary meetings to resort on own challenges, and which may feed up the Gumi Gayo General Assembly. This type of rally should be supported and encouraged as part of the local communities development initiatives as well as part of the national initiatives. The present document should be reached to all stakeholders.